

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Agency: ACARA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000314

Senator Wright, Penny asked on 04 June 2015, Proof Hansard page 75

ACARA: NAPLAN

Question

Senator WRIGHT: Finally, you have mentioned the purpose of NAPLAN a few times today. Before you said it generally and this time you said specifically that it is about assessing the individual. But it is more than that. Previously we have heard evidence that the purpose of NAPLAN is to take a snapshot of how particular schools are performing and so on. Is that a part of the purpose as well?

Mr Randall: Again, I will take it on notice so I do not misquote the statement we have about the purpose of NAPLAN.

Answer

The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has provided the following response.

The National Assessment Program (NAP), including NAPLAN and the NAP Sample Assessments, is the means by which governments, education authorities and schools can determine whether or not young Australians are reaching important educational goals for literacy and numeracy.

As the largest and most significant program within the NAP, NAPLAN provides data to inform the development of strategies to improve literacy and numeracy skills of students in all schools across Australia.

The real value of NAPLAN, therefore, lies in the uses to which the data are put. As part of NAPLAN reporting:

- Systems (nationally and at state and territory level) receive data to enable them to better target resource allocation and program interventions. The data also allow monitoring of system-level progress against defined targets.
- Schools receive data on student performance. Schools can analyse these data to add to the information they obtain through classroom assessment activities; identify areas of strength and need, individually and for groups; and to inform ongoing curriculum planning to support the needs of students. Many jurisdictions link their NAPLAN data analysis information to curriculum documents and relevant teaching materials. Schools can also access the My School website for information on NAPLAN results for schools with students with similar socio-education backgrounds.
- Parents receive a descriptive report that provides an indication of how their child is performing in relation to national standards.

- Communities have access to national level data through the national reports published on the NAP website each year. The public also has access to school level NAPLAN data on the *My School* website, alongside other important contextual information about schools. *My School* provides important data and information on Australian schools and their performance. In doing so, it strongly supports the policy of transparency, accountability and school improvement.